

Treasury Sanctions Al-Nusra Front Leadership in Syria and Militias Supporting the Assad Regime

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(Archived Content)

Action Targets Violent Groups Operating Under the Control of the Syrian Government and Al-Qa'ida's Attempts to Subvert the Syrian Opposition

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of the Treasury today designated two senior leaders of the Syrian-based al-Nusra front, Maysar Ali Musa Abdallah al-Juburi and Anas Hasan Khattab, pursuant to Executive Order 13224 (E.O. 13224) for acting on behalf of al-Qa'ida in Iraq (AQI). This designation was taken in coordination with the U.S. Department of State action to list the al-Nusra Front as an alias of AQI. Also today, the Treasury Department sanctioned two armed militia groups that operate under the control of the Syrian government, Jaysh al-Sha'bi and Shabiha, as well as two Shabiha commanders, pursuant to E.O. 13582, which blocks the property of the Syrian government. These actions represent continued U.S. government efforts to support the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people as they seek to free themselves from the oppression of the Assad regime and to deny al-Qa'ida's attempts to subvert the Syrian opposition.

“The United States will continue to aggressively pursue those who undermine the desires of the Syrian people to realize a representative government that does not employ violence against its own people. We will target the pro-Assad militias just as we will the terrorists who falsely cloak themselves in the flag of the legitimate opposition,” said Under Secretary for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David S. Cohen.

As the Syrian people continue their struggle against the repressive Assad regime, al-Nusra Front has sought to exploit the instability inside Syria for its own purposes, using tactics and espousing an ideology drawn from AQI that the Syrian people broadly reject. Since November 2011, al-Nusra Front has claimed responsibility for nearly 600 terrorist attacks, killing and wounding hundreds of Syrians. These activities are attempts by AQI to hijack the struggles of the legitimate Syrian opposition to further its own extremist ideology.

Today, the Treasury Department also took action against Jaysh al-Sha'bi and the Shabiha. These militias have been instrumental in the Assad regime's campaign of terror and violence against the citizens of Syria. Jaysh al-Sha'bi was created, and continues to be maintained, with support from Iran and Hizballah and is modeled after the Iranian Basij militia, which has proven itself effective at using violence and intimidation to suppress political dissent within Iran.

Any property or interests in property in the United States or in the possession or control of U.S. persons in which these entities or individuals have an interest are blocked, and U.S. persons are generally prohibited from engaging in transactions with them.

Maysar Ali Musa Abdallah al-Juburi

Maysar Ali Musa Abdallah al-Juburi (al-Juburi) moved from Mosul, Iraq to Syria in late 2011 to exploit Syria's more permissive security environment with the objectives of transferring al-Qa'ida's ideology to Syria and forming likeminded terrorist groups. As of mid 2012, al-Juburi became the religious and military commander for al-Nusra Front in eastern Syria and also operated a training camp for the network. Al-Juburi is suspected of participating in a 2004 attack against a Coalition Forces checkpoint in Ninawa Province, Iraq.

Anas Hasan Khattab

As of mid 2012, Anas Hasan Khattab (Khattab) was involved with the formation of al-Nusra Front for AQI. He communicated periodically with AQI leadership to receive financial and material assistance and helped facilitate funding and weapons for al-Nusra Front. Khattab works closely with al-Qa'ida-linked facilitators to provide logistical support to al-Nusra Front.

Jaysh al-Sha'bi

Jaysh al-Sha'bi is a militia controlled by the Syrian government and has conducted unilateral and joint operations with Syrian military and security elements against the Syrian opposition that have resulted in the deaths and injuries of Syrian opposition members.

Jaysh al-Sha'bi operates throughout Syria and has been particularly active in Damascus and Aleppo, where the militia has supplemented Syrian government forces' operations against the opposition.

Iran has helped establish and train the Jaysh al-Sha'bi militia in Syria to support the Asad regime and relieve pressure on Syrian government forces. Since mid-2012, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Qods Force (IRGC-QF) and Hizballah have provided training, advice, and weapons and equipment for Jaysh al-Sha'bi. Iran has also provided routine funding worth millions of dollars to the militia.

Iran's IRGC Commander Mohamad Ali Jafari also claimed that the militia, which he claimed has 50,000 members, was modeled after Iran's own Basij, a paramilitary force subordinate to the IRGC that has been heavily involved in the violent crackdowns and serious human rights abuses occurring in Iran since the June 2009 contested presidential election.

Shabiha

Since the beginning of the unrest in Syria, the Shabiha have operated as a direct action arm of the Government of Syria and its security services and Shabiha units have provided support to units from designated security services such as the Syrian Air Force Intelligence and Syrian Military Intelligence.

Shabiha units have worked with Syrian Military Intelligence to provide security at Syrian regime facilities and to man security checkpoints in Syrian cities and the Shabiha have been used by the Syrian military during operations in and around Damascus to interrogate and kill potential supporters of the Syrian opposition.

In addition to the Shabiha being identified as part of the Government of Syria pursuant to E.O. 13582, today the Treasury Department also designated the group pursuant to E.O. 13572 for being responsible for or complicit in the commission of human rights abuses in Syria, including those related to repression.

Since the beginning of the unrest, the Shabiha have fired into crowds of peaceful Syrian demonstrators, shot and killed Syrian demonstrators, arbitrarily detained Syrian civilians, and shot Syrian soldiers who refused to fire on peaceful demonstrators. In May 2011, the Shabiha were firing on Syrian civilians trying to cross into Lebanon near the town of al-Bire, Lebanon.

Ayman Jaber

Ayman Jaber was designated today pursuant to E.O. 13582 and E.O. 13572 for materially assisting, sponsoring, or providing financial, material, or technological support for, or goods or services in support of, the Shabiha and Mahir al-Asad. Mahir al-Asad, the brother of Bashar al-Asad was listed in the Annex to E.O. 13572 and played a leading role in the Syrian regime's actions in Dar'a where protesters were killed by Syrian security forces.

Ayman Jaber is currently a Shabiha leader responsible for directing Shabiha operations in Latakia, Syria, on behalf of the Syrian regime and is working with the Syrian Ministry of Defense and senior regime officials, including Mahir al-Asad, to procure weapons for the Shabiha units under his command.

Mahir al-Asad used Jaber to provide financial compensation to the Syrian protesters who demonstrated outside the U.S. Embassy in Damascus on July 11, 2011, and Jaber was involved with al-Asad in planning the attack on the U.S. Embassy that occurred the same day.

Mohammad Jaber

Mohammad Jaber was designated today pursuant to E.O. 13582 for providing material support to the Government of Syria.

Mohammad Jaber arranged for the transportation of pro-Syrian regime Shabiha thugs to Turkey in order to attack anti-Syrian regime personnel there.

Identifying Information

Name: Maysar Ali Musa Abdallah al-Juburi

AKA: Muyassir al-Jiburi

AKA: Al-Shammari

AKA: Muyassir Harara

AKA: Muyassir al-Shammari

AKA: Muhammad Khalid Hassan

AKA: Mus'ab al-Qahtani

DOB: 01 June 1976

POB: Al-Shura, Mosul, Iraq

Alternate POB: Harara, Ninawa Province, Iraq

Citizenship: Iraq

Name: Anas Hasan Khattab

AKA: Samir Ahmed al-Khayat

AKA: Hani

AKA: Abu Hamzah

Alternate DOB: 07 April 1986

POB: Damascus, Syria

National ID: 00351762055

Name: Jaysh al-Sha'bi

AKA: Jaysh al-Shaab

AKA: Jish Shaabi

AKA: Sha'bi

AKA: Al-Sha'bi Committees

AKA: Sha'bi Committees

AKA: Sha'bi Force

AKA: The Popular Army

AKA: Popular Forces

AKA: Popular Committees

AKA: People's Army

AKA: Army of the People

Name: Shabiha

AKA: Shabbihah

AKA: Shabbiha

AKA: Shabeeha

AKA: Al-Shabbihah

Location: Syria

Name: Ayman Jaber

AKA: Ayman Jabir

AKA: Aiman Jaber

AKA: Ayman Mehriz Jaber

AKA: Ayman Mohriz Jaber

AKA: Ayman Muhriz Jabir

DOB: January 17, 1967

Passport: 003308607 (Syria)

Name: Mohammad Jaber

AKA: Muhammad Jabir

AKA: Mohammad Jabir

AKA: Abu Ja'far

AKA: Muhammad Mahruz Jabir

AKA: Muhammad Muhraz Jabir

AKA: Abu Ja Far

AKA: Muhammad Muhriz Jabir

DOB: January 23, 1957

POB: Latakia, Syria

Passport Number: N004871560

Country of Issue: Syria

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